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LIFE'S
ENDURING
SATISFACTIONS

MAYAN REVELATION NUMBER 302

Health of Body and Mind
The Possession of Security
New Vistas Through Travel
Home, Family and Friends
Knowledge
Solitude
The Joy of a Completed Task
Divine Awareness
Unselfish Service
Conclusion
Affirmation

B ELOVED PERFECTOR:

Life now and hereafter is measured by those qualities that are enduring. Whatever else our experience may bring us, if it does not include satisfactions that stand the test of time, we look upon it as a failure.

It is said by visitors to Africa that people of primitive tribes often seem more contented than those in the so-called civilized societies. One traveler tells of a visit with an African chieftain. He pictured for him the luxuries and opulence of Western life. At the end of the interview the old chief solemnly asked, "But are the people happy?"

Which period in life brings the greatest satisfactions? Is it life's morning, noon, or evening? I presume that we would conclude happiness can be found in each segment of life's little day - its dawn, its noonday, and its time of sunset. Childhood and youth are times when great hopes are built, when fine dreams are born, and the future opens before us like an unexplored treasure land.

But the unknown sometimes arouses fear, and frequently brings cruel testing. In youth we often suffer from feelings of insecurity and anxiety concerning what may lie ahead. There is concern about the work of life to be chosen, and the ties of friendship and love which will develop. The morning of life is a time of hope and anticipation, of planning and growing, but it may have its disappointments and tensions.

The noonday of life may be the period of greatest triumph. It is then that dreams come true and great hopes are realized. The petty jealousies of youth are forgotten in the achievement of enduring satisfactions. But it is also a time of great struggle. The sun of life's day beats down upon us, and its competitions often end in disillusionment.

The evening of life should be the time of golden moments. It is the harvest period. It is then that the fruits of the application and toil of the morning and noonday are gathered. It should be the time when values have been sorted out, and we have kept intact the enduring satisfactions. But the evening may bring floods of remorse, and inward storms, especially if we are aware of opportunities lost in the busy rush of the years.

Enduring satisfactions can be glimpsed in youth, achieved in middle age, and preserved and enriched in the twilight hours. In this lesson we shall examine certain of the qualities that contribute to lasting satisfactions. You will recognize that some of these qualities are dependent upon forces beyond your control. In such cases you will need to utilize the handicap that is yours as you strive to reach other goals.

Many of the attitudes that make for life's satisfactions depend upon the use you make of your opportunities, and of the gifts God has entrusted to you. God has made it possible for you to possess enduring joy for daily living. The discovery of, and achievement of, enduring satisfactions depends upon you.

PRAYER

Gracious God, we give Thee thanks for the gift of life. Give us strength that we may face the challenge each day brings. Save us from the temptation to become lost in the struggle for the temporal and the tawdry. Help us to walk the pathways of thought and action that will bring us life's enduring satisfactions. In Jesus' name. Amen.



HEALTH OF BODY AND MIND

AMONG the factors that contribute to enduring satisfactions, health of body and mind are high on the list. Physical weaknesses have to be accepted and dealt with, but the important fact to keep in mind is that many of our bodily weaknesses are of our own making. Dr. Montague once said: "Ulcers are not caused by what you eat; ulcers are caused by what is eating you." Many of our bodily ills have their source in our mental attitudes.

We should consider, however, that not all our physical weaknesses can be controlled by our minds. Many stem from hereditary tendencies or from infections or accidents that are beyond our control. Such handicaps have to be accepted with grace, and faced with courage.

Yet, many bodily weaknesses can be controlled and cured. If left to run their course, they rob us of the enduring satisfactions that are the rightful heritage of the faith we profess. What we regard as the minor ills of the flesh are responsible for much of the misery in our daily lives. Unhappiness for ourselves and others is often produced by frazzled nerves, weak stomachs, and aching heads. It is interesting to note that the word "nerve" or "nerves" does not appear either in the Bible or in the works of Shakespeare. This generation has seen the alarming increase of illnesses that have their source in mental attitudes. Your health may depend upon whether you accept the truth and the method of living that will make for a calm and peaceful mind.

If you have a physical handicap do not assume that you can never claim life's lasting satisfactions. There are other factors besides health that make for happiness. There is no reason for you to say with Euripides, "Having lost the charm of a healthy body I now desire to die." A patient in New York state was bedridden for fifty-two years. Her home became a mecca for the distressed of mind and body who came in search of the happiness she radiated day by day. She triumphed in spirit over the ills of the flesh.

You can claim this satisfaction for yourself, however great may be the burden of your physical and mental weakness. Observe the habits that make for good health. Avoid the dissipations that drain your strength. Learn what it

means to control your body by controlling your mind. You need not undertake this struggle alone. It is part of God's plan that you should receive strength for all your needs.

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THE POSSESSION OF SECURITY

ECONOMIC security often appears to be a necessary factor in possessing life's enduring satisfactions. It is hard to feel contentment with unpaid bills and no money to meet them, or with calls for help and no means to answer them. It is not out of keeping with our most noble desires that we should want economic security.

But economic freedom alone is not enough to insure happiness. A majority of the more than twenty thousand suicides that occur every year in America are people who live in luxurious homes and have no financial worries. Few people on relief take their own lives. Eastman, the Kodak king, ended his life by his own hands. He had experienced a severe illness, but that was not the reason he gave for the act. He wrote, "I feel I have nothing to live for." He had never married, and had no one whom he felt loved him. His money could not buy him inner peace.

The greatest of life's values cannot be bought with gold. Love of family and friends, the confidence of the public, and the appreciation of all that is true and beautiful and good cannot be purchased in the markets of the world. Emerson, while once out walking, was asked if he owned any of the property around him. He answered, "I have an interest in the best things here. Do you hear that bird's song? I own an interest in that. Do you see the beautiful sunset? I am a shareholder in that. Do you feel the cooling breeze? Part of it is mine. I am a partner in all the good things of life about me."

There is nothing evil in your desire to possess economic security. But keep alive an awareness of the wealth that cannot be bought with money. Center your attention upon this treasure. The assets that are lasting do not depend upon bank books and checking accounts. They depend upon whether you are willing to use the enduring values that are free for the taking.

NEW VISTAS THROUGH TRAVEL

MANY of us have found travel to be a source of enduring satisfaction. To look upon scenes of national interest, about which we have read or studied, makes the heart leap for joy. Our horizons are lifted when we look upon life in foreign lands, or when we gaze at scenes of natural beauty. Travel broadens our horizons. It gives us new interests and satisfactions.

Our generation is fortunate in possessing means by which we can easily share the wonders of travel. The books of Richard Halliburton and Lowell Thomas become magic carpets to transport us to far places of the earth. Travelogues often serve as an opportunity to share strange and exotic parts of the world. I

visited an invalid who asked questions concerning some of the countries I had visited. Then she said proudly, "I have been to South America, Africa, and Asia. I have seen Yellowstone and Yosemite." With a twinkle in her eye, she added, "I have seen many, many travelogues. I have seen every part of the world during the past eight years." Her animation revealed that she had found lasting pleasure in the journeys she had shared.

Push back the horizons of your mind by the uplifting power of travel. If you cannot go in person to the places of which you have dreamed, then go in imagination, with the author or the photographer as your guide. You will discover that travel is a source of inspiration and endless delight.

HOME, FAMILY AND FRIENDS

THERE is no substitute for the joy that comes from our personal associations. Family and friends are an everlasting source of lasting satisfaction. The poet has rightly said:

"A little shelter from life's stress
Where I may lay me prone.
And bear my soul in loneliness
And know as I am known."

Fortunate is that person who experiences the joy of home and family. Minds anxious and disturbed are quieted and made peaceful by the understanding and encouragement found in a home where love rules. A world that seems complex and disturbing becomes a heaven of tranquility when you seek the companionship of those who care.

Beyond the walls of the house in which we live we are supported by the circle of friends who have become a part of life every day. Our real friends may be divided into four groups:

The first in the scale upward includes those whom we meet casually on social occasions or at public events. We enjoy them, but usually they are out of mind when out of sight.

The second group includes our business or professional associates. Some may become close friends, but for many we have no further concern than the interests which brought us together.

The third group includes our intellectual companions who enjoy the same music, art, and books which we enjoy. They are congenial acquaintances whose common interests may lead to deep and abiding friendship.

The last group includes our spiritual companions - those who, in holy bonds of friendship, share our joys and triumphs. Fellowship with them contributes to our lasting satisfactions.

KNOWLEDGE

IT is often said that ignorance is bliss. If that were so it would be foolish to seek Wisdom. Yet it is never bliss to be ignorant of the great currents that sweep across the world to advance the thought of man. We are enriched by knowledge of literature and the arts. Our horizons are lifted by the insights we gain into the quest of men to know God and to understand His will.

There is a quiet and genuine joy that comes from discovering new facts, exploring new continents of knowledge, and becoming a person of learning. It was Lessing who said, "The pursuit of knowledge is more precious than its possession." Many times you will discover that he was right.

The individual who rises to eminence among the well-read and cultured of the community has a right to be happy. There is lasting joy in the plain living and high thinking that enables one to fill the mind with "thoughts that pierce the night like stars, and with their mild persistence lead man's search to vaster issues."

Dr. Timothy Dwight of Yale defined the happiest man as the one who thinks the most beautiful thoughts. The individual whose mind is filled with thoughts of God and of beauty has found the secret of genuine contentment. That mind is in torment where hate and falsehood and ugliness have become master.

You are never too old to feed your mind with new insights. Age is no barrier to the youthful qualities of seeking and finding. In the quest you will unearth the treasure of lasting satisfactions.

SOLITUDE

FOR a quiet soul, solitude is a source of enduring joy. The good and the great of every generation have sought out the quiet places of the earth in their search for happiness. There are times when all of us feel like crying out with Wordsworth, "The world is too much with us." At such times it is a joy to flee, like a bird, to the mountains. It is a source of satisfaction to walk in a quiet garden.

You need a place of refuge to which you can go to be by yourself, there to recover life's meaning in solitude. It may be a room in your home which has special meaning because of former associations. It may be the corner of a library, or a secluded spot in your office at lunch hour.

Cherish the opportunities when you can be alone. Use such occasions to tune your wavelength to that of the Eternal. You will return to the world with fresh strength to face your problems. You will gain a quiet calm which is far more effective than the hectic pressure one is tempted to use to gain his desired ends.

The great treasures that are available to you in moments of solitude are

among life's most enduring satisfactions. Don't miss them by the plea that you are too busy.

THE JOY OF A COMPLETED TASK

MANY of the moments of deepest satisfaction in daily living are reserved for occasions when we have completed a task undertaken hesitantly, but with diligence pursued to completion. There is joy in plowing the last row of corn, or in harvesting the last load of hay. The physician who dismisses a patient as cured, or the lawyer who wins a successful jury case, knows real satisfaction. We have watched the pride in the face of the architect who sees his dream brought to completion in a building. The author finds a joy when he holds in his hand the first copy of a volume into which he has poured his very life.

Such satisfactions are not reserved for those who complete a task that gains wide recognition. They are available to all of us. The mother feels it when she sends her child off to school bright and shining. The housewife feels it when pies fresh from the oven are ready to eat. The man feels it who looks on a lawn well groomed after cutting and trimming it.

It should be remembered that not all our undertakings can be brought to a successful completion. We must face the fact that there will be defeats, and strive not to be broken by them. Theodore Roosevelt once said that a man is a success who succeeds in doing fifty-one percent of the things he wished to do!

Enjoy to the full the enduring satisfaction that comes from a task well done. Don't hesitate to begin because of a fear that you might fail. Start with a simple task that gives hope of completion. Even a minor victory can become the source of lasting happiness.

DIVINE AWARENESS

THE consciousness of our Divine origin, and of our relationship to the highest forces in the universe, awakens within us feelings of lasting joy. From such a vantage point life is looked upon as something more than a walking shadow, or a tale told by an idiot. There is no reason to cry, "Out! Out! brief candle!" When we endeavor to live out our lives, conscious of a Divine Plan and Purpose, we become one with heaven and the stars. For all of us who are sensitive there is an inner voice that speaks to us, and directs us to leave the lower levels of human instincts and desires, and seek higher ground. When we respond to that voice, we feel a joy that is enduring.

In every age awareness that man is more than an animal, that he has a Divine origin and destiny, has lifted him to higher levels. Moreover, it has contributed to lasting satisfactions. You are made to experience that assurance. You can be blind to it, held down by bodily weaknesses or mental despair, but you

need not endure in that state.

The consciousness of your importance in the eyes of God, and of His need for what you can be and do, will transform your daily existence until it becomes a thrilling adventure. As you gain this insight you will find a key that unlocks the treasure of happiness.

UNSELFISH SERVICE

UNSELFISH service is another source of enduring satisfaction. To share a project that gives help to others is to see the heavens open and the face of God shine through. For many years Frank S. Ondernonk labored among the desperately poor people of old Mexico. On one occasion a group of touring Americans visited his remote place of service. They were amazed at the work he was doing and expressed sympathy for him in his primitive surroundings. Aroused by their pitying attitude, Doctor Ondernonk said to them: "Do not sympathize with me, you who travel widely and enjoy your wealth. You will know nothing of real happiness until you lose yourself in a great cause and give your lives to a people from whom you expect nothing." He received satisfactions in service that many of us miss.

Individuals who take part in great social enterprises return to their labor refreshed in soul even though they be weary in body. The greater the sacrifice is, the greater the happiness will be. The selfish soul knows nothing of the satisfaction that comes to one who loses himself in a great cause. With one hand he reaches up and touches the stars for inspiration, and with the other he reaches down to help those who are in need.

Louis Pasteur offered a supreme example of the lasting joy that comes through service. Every farmer in the world is his debtor. It was he who found the cure for cholera among hogs, and anthrax among cattle. His work in exploring the germ theory of disease, and the part bacteria plays in it, was the greatest work of its kind ever performed. Though honors came to him from many nations, he found his greatest satisfaction in feeling that he had helped to lift the burdens of humanity.

Statuary Hall in the National Capitol in Washington contains memorials to outstanding servants of the nation. Each state was privileged to honor two of its citizens. It is interesting to note that, while some statesmen are honored, there are many statues raised to those who served their country by helping to lift the burdens of the poor. One cannot walk among those memorials without being reminded that service to others is the most lasting testimonial to a good life.

There is enduring satisfaction available to you as you give yourself to unselfish service. It will become the source of your deepest joy, and will constitute the finest memorial you can leave to others who follow you.

CONCLUSION

You may be tempted to conclude that there is no complete happiness to be attained in a troubled world like that in which you live. Yet, such happiness can be yours. There is a certain satisfaction that comes from knowing you have achieved some degree of wealth and wisdom. But these treasures may be lost. The human ties represented by love and friendship are often broken. In such hours even the memory of friendship can be an enduring delight.

We are wise to remember that deeds well done, and service rendered unselfishly, create an enduring residue of satisfaction that no passing events can erase. The most abiding sources of enduring satisfaction are those in which we have recognized our place as God's children, and have used our gifts wisely and well.

Make a beginning today in the search for enduring satisfactions. As you lose yourself in right thinking, noble living, and high endeavor, you will reap a harvest of happiness that nothing can destroy.

AFFIRMATION

In a changing and disturbing world I will seek and find life's enduring satisfactions.

Blessings,

Your Instructor.

Your next Lessons are the first of a new Series, devoted to "Spiritual Progress Through Prayer". Since the possibilities of prayer are so vast, and so promising for the improvement of your life, the first Lessons in the Series will take up the subjects "Making an Intelligent Approach to Prayer" and "Overcoming Hindrances to Effective Prayer". Preceding Lessons have done much to prepare you for this most helpful Series, and your Instructor hopes that you will review Lessons 293 through 300 as you await the first lessons of the new Series.
